

Rep. Dennis Kucinich, Chairman of the Domestic Policy Subcommittee of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, today announced a hearing on necessary reforms in Medicaid pediatric dental care . The hearing will also reveal the findings of a Subcommittee investigation. Additionally, Acting Medicaid Director Herb Kuhn will testify on the recent steps taken to reform pediatric dental care under Medicaid.

Date: Tuesday, September 23, 2008
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building

Background:

The Subcommittee began an investigation of pediatric dental care under Medicaid after the death of twelve-year old Deamonte Driver of Prince George's County, Maryland, who died of a brain infection caused by untreated tooth decay in 2007.

A Subcommittee review of the records of UnitedHealthCare (United), the managed care organization responsible for Deamonte at the time of his death, revealed that nearly 11,000 Maryland children enrolled in United had not seen a dentist in four or more consecutive years- putting them in the same precarious position as Deamonte was in at the time of his tragic death. The review also revealed that United's dental provider network was not nearly as robust as United had claimed: 55% of all dental services provided in 2006 in Prince George County were conducted by just seven dentists.

Shortly after the release of its findings in October 2007, the Subcommittee expanded its investigation to three additional MCO's in four other states and counties. Tuesday's hearing will reveal the results of that investigation.